

GOAL 18: BEACHES AND DUNES

Beaches and dunes are the physical environments at the very edge of the sea. These are highly dynamic places; sand and gravel are moved by wind, waves, and currents. They serve as buffers between the energy of the ocean and the land. Beaches and dunes also provide the public with recreational opportunities and draw scores of visitors to Oregon each year.

Statewide Planning Goal 18 focuses on conserving and protecting Oregon's beach and dune resources, and on recognizing and reducing exposure to hazards in this dynamic, sometime quickly changing environment. Goal 18 is central to the work of coastal communities in addressing the impacts of coastal hazards and climate change in areas along the ocean shore.

Local governments are required to inventory beaches and dunes and describe the stability, movement, groundwater resources, hazards and values of the beach, dune, and interdune areas. Local governments must then apply appropriate beach and dune policies for use in these areas.

Goal 18 includes some requirements are of particular importance:

Prohibition Areas

The goal prohibits development on the most sensitive and hazardous landforms in the beach and dune environment, including beaches, active foredunes and other dune areas subject to severe erosion or flooding. This requirement has been instrumental in preventing inappropriate development on these critical landforms.

Shoreline Armoring

The goal limits the placement of beachfront protective structures (i.e. shoreline armoring such as riprap and seawalls) to those areas where development existed prior to 1977. This policy effectively places a cap on the amount of ocean shore that may be hardened, and thus limits the cumulative impacts of such hardening.

Shoreline armoring can cause scouring and lowering of the beach profile, which can result over time in the loss of access to Oregon's public beaches. New development must account for shoreline erosion through non-structural approaches (e.g. increased setbacks). In the face of increased ocean erosion occurring in conjunction with climate change and sea level rise, limiting hard structures and allowing natural shoreline migration is a critical policy tool for conserving and maintaining Oregon's ocean beaches.

[Guidebook on Erosion Control Practices of the Oregon Coast](#)

Dune Grading

The goal specifies detailed requirements for foredune grading (lowering of the dunes for views). Such grading is permitted in limited circumstances in association with existing development. It must be based on a specific dune system management plan that prescribes standards for maintaining flood protection, maintaining overall system sand supply, and post-grading sand stabilization (e.g. planting of beach grass). There are currently six official dune management plans in place in Oregon.

Ocean Shore Regulation

Oregon's ocean beaches are managed by the [Oregon Parks and Recreation Department \(OPRD\)](#) which has an extensive permitting program for shoreline protection under [ORS 390.605 – 390.770](#), also known as the "Beach Bill." OPRD regulates activities affecting the ocean shorelands west of the statutory vegetation line or the line of established vegetation, whichever is most landward. This includes beachfront protective structures, stairways, walkways, or other structures than encroach on the public beach. OPRD has incorporated the [Oregon Department of State Lands](#) authority to regulate removal and fill activities along the ocean shore under its permit program. Permitted activities must be consistent with the Statewide Planning Goals (especially Goal 18), local comprehensive plans, and with the [OPRD Ocean Shores Management Plan](#).

suited for water dependent uses" be protected for such uses, and that local zoning regulations prevent the establishment of uses which would preempt the availability of such lands for water dependent development. In 1999 LCDRC adopted an administrative rule to provide additional guidance for implementing this Goal 17 requirement. Known as the water dependent shorelands rule, OAR 660, Division 37 establishes a methodology for calculating the minimum amount of shorelands to be protected for water dependent and also provides more detailed guidance on the qualifications of shorelands suitable for water dependent uses, as well as suggested land use regulations and standards appropriate for the protection of these shoreland sites.

Supporting Documents

 STATEWIDE PLANNING GOAL 18(16.19 KB)

 CLATSOP COUNTY GOAL 18(338.34 KB)